



ELREC Newsletter

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council

Promoting Equality • Fighting Discrimination • Fostering Good Relations

ISSUE 50: April 2017

From the Chair

Honorary Patron

Lord Provost of Edinburgh
Rt Hon Donald Wilson

Honorary President

Prof Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE

Management Board

Chair

Mr Foysoyl Choudhury MBE

Vice Chair and Convenor of Personnel Subcommittee

Mr Shami Khan DL

Treasurer

Cllr Carl John

Company Secretary

Mr. Rajnish Singh

Convenor Membership Subcommittee

Ms Melanie Vanita Maria Beaumont

Convenor Finance and General Purposes Subcommittee

Mrs Irina Lazarenko

Convenor Education Subcommittee

Mr Mohamed Amjad Chaudhry

Convenor Volunteering Subcommittee

Mrs Azra Sharif-Qayyum

Board Members

Mr Ijaz Nazir

Dr John Christopher Wigglesworth

Mrs Neena Agarwal

Staff

Project Lead Officer/Fundraiser

E Spano

Rachel Vette

Administrator

D Kaner Ural

Finance Officer

A Barbascompa

Equalities Engagement Officer

M Rahman

Support and Advice

M Krumins

Youth Development Officer

N Greener

True Colours Worker

U Dosen

Volunteer Coordinator

U Dosen

Youth Zone Coordinator

C Nicoletti

Bright Choices Officer

M Rostami

Routes to Roots Project Coordinator

Neil Ogilvy

Work Space Maintenance

D Panton

Communities for Conservation:

Coordinator — J M Gaunand

Link Officers — D Tai, E K Lukaszek,
D Ahmed, F Huczewska, M Diaz

Hello and welcome to our spring newsletter.

The past few months have been ones of continuation and growth for ELREC. We held our AGM on the 21st of March and were incredibly proud of the wonderful comments made about our organisation by the Lord Provost. Additionally, our first board meeting after the AGM was held on the 5th of April and I would like to give my sincere thanks for being re-elected to the position of Chair.



I am pleased to confirm that our projects are as strong as ever and that their good work has been recognised by funders, with continuing grants being awarded to Communities for Conservation by the Climate Challenge Fund as well as True Colours and Equalities Engagement who both received funds to continue their work for another 3 years from the Voluntary Action Fund and the Scottish Government. Additionally, we have been given new funding for a hate crime youth workshop project through the Midlothian Council which we are very excited to begin at the end of July. Unfortunately, our project Young People Against Hate is paused at the moment due to a gap in funding, but we are optimistic that this can be recuperated from other sources.

Thanks to our staff, volunteers, members and board for their continued dedication to the work of ELREC.

Foysoyl Choudhury MBE Chair

From the Honorary President

The presenter said: "Hello, and welcome to the podcast of '**The Life Scientific**'. First Broadcast on BBC Radio Four. I'm Jim Al Khalili and my mission is to interview the most fascinating and important scientists alive today, and to find out what makes them tick. If my guest today had been just one month older when he arrived in London as a teenager from Jamaica in 1955, he almost certainly wouldn't be the world renowned professor of brewing and distilling that he is today. Geoff Palmer's research has earned him the brewing equivalent of a Noble Prize. He is one of only four people ever to receive it and the first ever European. He says he became obsessed with finding out how different grains work and his discoveries about barley and how to improve malt production have saved the brewing industry Millions. But his route into science wasn't a conventional one. He was classed by his first London school as educationally subnormal. Despite this, he went on to climb the ranks of academia and in 1990, became Scotland's first black professor. As he says, one of his great joys is looking at rows of beers in shops across the world and knowing who brewed each bottle, because he was the one who taught them. Despite being retired, he's still carrying out research but now he makes his discoveries in his kitchen. Geoff Palmer, welcome to '**The Life Scientific**'.



A summary of Prof. Palmer's response is as follows:

'My mother left Jamaica for London in 1948 where she worked in a factory for **£5 per week** in the East end of London. I joined her in 1955. I had to return to school because I was 1 month short of my 15th birthday. The school leaving age then was 15 years of age. I was designated Educationally Sub-Normal (ESN) and was sent to a Secondary Modern School. Later, I was transferred from the Secondary Modern School to a Grammar School because I was **fairly** good at cricket. I left the Grammar School in 1958 and secured a job at Queen Elizabeth's College as a junior technician with responsibility for cleaning up after students. The Professor did two things: First, he changed my name from Godfrey to Geoff which my mother never understood, and he encouraged me to attain university entrance requirements for O levels and A levels. However, all the universities I applied to in 1961 turned me down and the Professor managed to get me a place at Leicester University where I gained an Hons degree in Botany in 1964. In passing, in 2016 Leicester University gave me an Honorary Doctor of Science.

After Leicester University, I returned to London in 1964. The only job I could get was a job of peeling potatoes in a restaurant. At that time, race relations were difficult because there were no race relation laws. BME people were attacked on the streets and even had to pay higher insurance premiums and politicians gained parliamentary seats by expressing negative attitudes about BME people. In late 1964, I attended an interview at Heriot Watt University and started my PhD in 1965 on the science and technology of barley and malt. After securing my PhD in 1967, I worked at the Brewing Research Foundation in England. At the Brewing Research Foundation, I developed the use of the Scanning Electron Microscope to study the structure of cereal grains, including barley, and developed the barley abrasion technique which led to an acceleration of the malting process. In general, my work led to a better understanding of the structure and function of cereal grains. I returned to the Heriot Watt as a lecturer in 1977 where I taught and supervised the research of a large number of students at MSc and PhD levels. I retired in 2005. During this period, I was involved in the setting up of ELREC and have served on the Boards of various charity and community organisations.

I was fortunate enough to have travelled abroad and was involved in the selling of the first consignment of British barley to China. I also helped to develop the use of sorghum grains for use as brewing and food materials in Nigeria, India and other countries. The honours, such as Professorship, OBE, Honorary degrees and Knighthood relate to the help and support I have had from the good people that I have met. Prof. Palmer has published over a hundred scientific papers on brewing, distilling and cereal grains, including a textbook on cereals. He has also published two books about history and community relations.'

Prof Sir Geoff Palmer

Honorary President

From the Vice Chair

Dear all,

Welcome to our spring newsletter.

The first half of this year has seen quite a few changes in staff. Firstly, I would like to extend my thanks to Dr. Elisabetta Spano (Project Lead Officer/Fundraiser), Nicholas Greener (Youth Development Officer for YPAH project), Nicole Currie (Bright Choices Project Worker), and Asma Kassim (South Asian Community Link Officer) for their service and hard work at ELREC. They will be sincerely missed by all of us and we wish them the best in their future endeavours!

I would also like to give a warm welcome to our new board member Magdalena Sajnaga as well as the new Project Lead Officer/Fundraiser Rachel Vette and our new South Asian Community Link Officer Fahmida Huczewska, who are all excellent additions to the team here. Additionally, I would like to welcome Mitra Rostami into her new full-time position as the Bright Choices Project Worker and thank her for all her hard work with both this project and the No Hate Here programme she has been running for the past 6 months.

I am proud of every member of our staff for their hard work and dedication, and look forward to continuing to welcome more employees and volunteers in the months to come.

Shami Khan

Vice Chair and Convenor of the Personnel Subcommittee



From our new Board Member

Dear all,

welcome to our April newsletter. It is a pleasure for me to write here. I would like to thank ELREC for electing me as a new Board Member as well as Education Subcommittee. I am truly honored by the trust you have instilled in me and am very excited to get to work with you and to contribute and promote ELREC in our communities. I am thrilled to be working with such a great group of elected officials and I hope that our cooperation will bring many fruits.

Magdalena Sajnaga

Board Member



From the Project Lead Officer and Fundraiser

Dear all,

I am delighted to be joining the team at ELREC as the new Project lead Officer/Fundraiser and to contribute to the work and continued success of this fantastic organisation!

I am from Seattle, Washington in the United States and completed my Bachelor's degree at Western Washington University where I specialised in International Studies, Sociology of Gender and French language. Upon completion of my degree, I lived in Australia for a year gaining experience in fundraising and the voluntary sector before moving to the UK to undertake a Master's degree at University College London from which I have recently graduated with an MA in Gender, Society and Representation. I am a regular contributor to the feminist zine *The Fly Trap* and have created artwork for the promotion of an art show in NYC entitled *REACT*, addressing the current xenophobic political rhetoric of the United States. My studies focused on feminist movements and backlash movements to these increases in women's rights—taking an intersectional approach to understanding these issues—and I am excited to use this knowledge, in addition to my experience in fundraising and advocacy, to help ELREC in its fight to promote equality and end discrimination in Edinburgh and beyond.



Rachel Vette

rachel.vette@elrec.org.uk

ELREC's Support and Advice Service

If you've been discriminated against; need assistance or are looking for housing and benefits advice, we're here to help. We offer free and impartial advice for individuals who have suffered discrimination, need to report hate crimes or need assistance in working with public bodies. If we're unable to help, we'll help you take your case to an appropriate organisation who can.

If you would like to come and see us, please call and book an appointment first, and also write down details of the incident, paying particular attention to dates. We'll listen to your case and make an assessment, helping you to identify your options and decide on the best course of action.

To report an incident or get more information contact us at: ELREC, 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH. (T) 0131 556 0441 (F) 0131 556 8577(E) admin@elrec.org.uk (W) www.elrec.org.uk

Information on how to report online can be found here:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/hate-crime/>

From the True Colours Coordinator

Hello all,

First of all I would like to thank the TRUE Colours volunteers for all the help and dedication in the last few months. We wouldn't be able to continue our work if it weren't for you.

Together with the volunteers we have been developing a creative film making workshops for primary school students. The workshops are aimed at giving young people the tools and the skills to create their own vision of equality and promoting respect and inclusion.

Additionally, the group delivered an outdoor workshop with around 30 young people ages 5 – 11 in the collaboration with YPAH and Canongate Youth Project. The aim of the workshop was to promote cultural diversity and equality, as well as tackle common stereotypes. Thus, we have developed four activities, namely 'Bursting Balloon Stereotypes' and the 'Marco Polo Treasure Hunt' along with the provision of drawing materials.

The volunteers also helped to develop and facilitate the Equality Act 2010 and workers' rights workshops for a group in Right Track at the end of March. The group consisted of around 15 young people ages between 16 and 17. The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness on discrimination and protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010.

TRUE Colours delivered four sessions with four different groups (ages 11-17) of Muslim young people as



part of a religious after school club held currently in James Gillespie's High School. The workshops focused on Islamophobia in Scotland and around the world, touching subjects like media bias, extremist groups in other religions, support networks and positive and supportive reactions to the current islamophobic rhetoric, particularly in the US. Overall the feedback was very positive.

The other Islamophobia workshops were delivered in Gorgie Mills school (ages 14-15), and although similar, these were focusing on myth busting and challenging negative attitudes towards Muslim people.

In January we have delivered a workshop for Community Renewal East Centre – mostly employability and health workers working with young people and adults in the area. The workshop focused on cultural diversity, Equality Act 2010 and hate crime. Some of the comments from the feedback included:

"I learned some things about how it's also up to the employer to arrange to communicate with those from different countries if nothing is already in place. I also think the exercise at the end was a very good visual to see how people from different places can experience all different types of discrimination, which may set them very far apart from others."

Una Dosen

udosen@elrec.org.uk

From the Youth Zone Coordinator

Hello everyone from our couch in the Youth Zone!

More and more people are joining our activities. Since July 2017 more than eighty participants enjoyed our welcoming space and our amazing activities. Thank you everyone!!! During the last three months, we met for several workshops on social media skills and career guidance.

The 1-on-1 support is becoming very popular. Young people appreciate our help in CV-review and job search. Here is what some of them told us after having a mock interview with us:

"I was so scared before the interview. My hands were sweating and I did not know what to expect. I read a lot of material about interview questions and answering techniques, but when I am nervous my mind goes blank. Now that I have tried once, I feel much more confident in facing a real job interview!"

You might have also seen us around Edinburgh, because we participated in some events like People Know How's Community Space opening event and Career fairs and cafes at Napier University. Keep your eyes open, you might spot us again somewhere!

We are still Eurodesk UK Partner. This means, you can come to us if you want to know more



Social Media Workshop , 6th April 2017

about European funded opportunities for young people and youth organisations.

To celebrate the European Youth week (1-7 May), our drop-in on May 3rd will focus on European Youth Mobility! And there will be surprises awaiting the ones who will visit us on that day!

There are loads of activities and training opportunities coming up for next months! Stay with us, we'll keep you posted!

Follow us on

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/youthzoneedin>),
 Facebook (www.facebook.com/youthzoneedinburgh) or
 Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/youthzone_elrec/).



Cristiana Nicoletti

cristiana.nicoletti@elrec.org.uk

Volunteering to Achieve

In the last 10 months we have hosted 18 different trainings and workshops including Disability Awareness, Social Media, Transgender Awareness, Managing volunteers and Human Rights, with approximately 10 people attending each of the training. Additionally, in the next three months ELREC will host a Public Speaking training, Fundraising training, Evidencing Impact and Stress Management workshop. More details about this can be found on our website.

Sadly, we have come to the end of the project's funding year. I would like to thank all of our fantastic and hardworking volunteers and staff for their support in the last 12 months. During this time we have hosted an exciting, dynamic and diverse group who share a willingness to contribute their time and talent towards promoting equality and fighting discrimination. It's safe to say that our volunteer team is key to our projects' success and daily functioning of the organisation. As a thank you we have organised a Sushi Making Class for the volunteers at the end of March. Volunteers were invited to spend a couple of hours away from the usual stress of a working week, to relax and spend a fun evening learning how to make sushi at one of the Sushi restaurants close to ELREC offices.

Una Dosen

udosen@elrec.org.uk

Below are the volunteers' impressions after the event:

- "Great night, learnt so much and met loads of new people"
- "Feel really appreciated, such a nice way to meet the other volunteers"
- "Great experience, thank you so much"
- "Really enjoyed last night, it was really successful and an excellent idea for team building"



Young People Against Hate

Hi from all the staff and volunteers involved in the Young People Against Hate (YPAH) project. The last four months have been hugely success for the project, the YPAH has once again exceed its target for young people engaged and volunteers supported. This of course couldn't have been possible without those same volunteers and all the ELREC staffs support and dedication. In the last four months the project has specifically focused volunteer development, practitioner training and the long term legacy of the YPAH.

The project has always placed a huge emphasis on helping ELRECs volunteers develop transferable skills which they believe will aid them in future high education and employment. The project has supported a variety of training over the last 4



True Colours team getting ready for a workshop



Teachers & students learn how to put on a Hijab

months. Group trainings; on social media, public speaking, confidence building, and individual courses on specialist chosen topics; administration skills, funding training and domestic violence prevention training. These trainings have been a cornerstone of the projects desire to help volunteers enhance their own skills.

The YPAH has worked in partnership with ELRECs new project, No hate Here, a project funded by Leith Decides and focusing on Hate Crime in Leith. We have delivered a series of workshops for local Leith based practitioners and residents who have requested more support and training in relation to Hate Crime and supporting those harmed by it.

Additionally the YPAH has continued its work with schools and youth groups. The project has successfully completed two 5 week programmes in the last 4 months and has facilitated 25 workshops in that same time period. Over the last year the project has engaged with over 901 young people.



Hate Crime Awareness workshop with No Hate Here



Boost employability training for our volunteers

The newsletter is tinged with a slight sadness; unfortunately the project is coming to an end for now. ELREC has applied for new funding from a variety of sources and we hope to have the YPAH back up and running around July/ August this year. I would like to thank all the volunteers and ELREC staff members who have support the project throughout my time here. The project has gone from small projects which focussed on increasing the awareness of a few hundred young people to a large project which has engaged with over 3000 young people in the last 3 years and hundreds of community workers who are passionate about challenging hate crimes in Edinburgh.

Nicholas Greener

ngreener@elrec.org.uk

Communities for Conservation

We are delighted to announce that ELREC has received a Climate Challenge Fund grant of £108,687 to run the Communities for Conservation project for another year. The project works with ethnic minority communities in Edinburgh and Livingston in initiatives related to energy saving, cycling and food growing. Project activities include home energy advice visits to help people save energy and carbon, and to move out of fuel poverty. The project also offers bikeability classes, food growing workshops and events to mainstream climate change. We are now welcoming Fahmida Huczewska who will be our new South Asian Community Link Officer. We also received a grant of £2125 from Cycling Scotland which will help us to continue our bike activities.

ENERGY ADVICE

In this quarter, the team helped many clients to receive the £140 Warm Home Discount, switch to cheaper or green suppliers, clear debt, get smart meters, and save energy. A few clients received new heating system and cavity wall insulation free of cost through Warmer Home Scotland. Congratulation to the dedicated Community Link Officers who helped over 170 people save energy in their homes this year.

COMMUNITY GARDENS AND WORKSHOPS

The growing season is starting again and the community gardens in Milton road, Wester Hailes and Drumrae are becoming vibrant with life again. If you would like to join one of the weekly 'grow your own' sessions, contact us. At the Royal Botanics, the first session was about planting in containers.

In addition to workshops, and events, we screened the environmental movies 'Demain', 'Inhabit', and 'Schooling the world'.

CYCLING CLUB

We organised a few bike trips to Glentress Forest, Cramond Island, and Drumlanrig castle to encourage people to cycle more and to explore local woodlands. In addition we teach bike ability every Sunday.

Thank you to the staff and our volunteers for the wonderful work that they do.

To volunteer with us, obtain free energy advice or join our workshops, events or community gardens

please call 0131
cfc@elrec.org.uk

 556 0441 or
[ELRECC4C](https://www.facebook.com/ELRECC4C)

 email:
[@ELREC_CFC](https://twitter.com/ELREC_CFC)



Cycling Scotland



Communities for Conservation (cont)

ELREC cycles for refugees

In partnership with the Refugee Survival Trust, ELREC organised a fundraising cycle ride for refugees on Sunday 26th March. The 40 participants cycled 9 miles to Lauriston castle and explored the woodland and Japanese gardens.

We would like to thank Rt Hon. Lord Provost Donald Wilson for taking part in the ride and for his excellent speech. Thank you also to Cllr. Lesley Hinds for supporting the event! Our initiative has inspired Katherine to replicate this initiative in Glasgow. Thank you all for your generous donations. We raised above £1000. It is still time to show your support:

<https://www.gofundme.com/ELRECCyclesforrefugees>

All funds are going to The Refugee Survival Trust that provides grants to asylum claimants and refugees living in Scotland to either alleviate poverty and destitution, or help refugees and asylum claimants to overcome obstacles in accessing educational and employment opportunities. These grants are given as a short-term measure whilst efforts to tackle the cause of destitution are made. The money will go towards providing financial support to refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland to allow them to buy food and other essentials, when no other support is available. They can also provide bus passes to asylum seekers in order to help them make essential trips such as attending important appointments and collecting parcels from foodbanks.



Communities for Conservation (cont)

Edinburgh Climate Festival

Around 400 people attended the Edinburgh Climate Festival on 18th March 2017. It was a festive community and family friendly event with great diversity of people, stalls and activities to celebrate climate action. The joint venture was organised by ELREC, Edinburgh World Heritage, the Welcoming, NKS, SCOREscotland, the SHRUB, and MY Adventure.

Activities included Home Energy Scotland's hand powered light bulb games, British Gas' smart meters, CEMVO Scotland's 1000 faces stall, Bridgend Growing Communities' potato growing stall, RSPB children's activities, Forestry Commission's kids activities, Face Painting, Cosmopolita's green journalist game, Food Sharing Edinburgh's intercepted food stall, smoothie bike and many more.

'Engineering For Change' showed how to charge up a phone by pedalling. The Welcoming offered an upcycled fashion show. We had environmental story telling and Arts and Craft, excerpts of the environmental movie 'Demain', climate change quizzes for children and adults, sitar music, New Scots Science Ceilidh Band's sustainable dances and Ceilidh. Vegware donated compostable cutlery for the delicious sustainably sourced food, and Vita Coco donated coconut water.

Volunteers received awards for their contribution to CCF projects. Bailie Elaine Aitken representing Lord Provost, Caro Kemp, development officer representing Keep Scotland Beautiful Climate Challenge Fund, and Anna Publico-Ong, vice chair of CEMVO recognised the 7 volunteers. ELREC volunteer, Connie Yeung received one of the climate champions 2017 award.

We would like to thank our volunteers who helped on the day: Claire, Miklos, Nestor, Cristiana, Zach, Larisa, Gray, Gabrielle, Tomasz, Gosia, Federica and Connie.

The event was greatly enjoyed:

"Fantastic event! great activities. Thanks so much" "I loved the community atmosphere"

"I liked the different cultures, different people, the diversity"

"I learnt that a lot of people care, more than you might otherwise think, tackling climate change can be fun meaningful if we do it together as a community."





From Volunteers

I arrived in Edinburgh, in my first year of university, willing to get involved locally to improve people's life along with our planet health. In February, I discovered the Communities for Conservation project, and I met my objectives: I had the opportunity to take action against climate change with people from different ages and communities. I have participated on the organization a movie screening and discussion at the Climate festival and I am now helping on the elaboration of the project of a European seminar about sharing economy and environmental education in youth work. I have also participated in events such as Cycling for Refugees, gardening with the ELREC Greenkeepers and movie screenings and discussions with the Permaculture Community Classroom. I've been volunteering for only few months and I am still discovering all the exciting events I can become involved in. It feels like being a big friendly family both with the staff and participants, so I enjoy as much preparing for events and being part of them. Being part of a community is an amazing feeling. Thank you ELREC!



Gabrielle Cathala

I started volunteering back in October 2015 with the Communities for Conservation project, after a bit of a break I was welcomed back to help again! I work mainly with the cycling project. I have organised a couple of trips and I led the group at the fundraising cycle to Lauriston castle where we raised over £1000 for the Refugee Survival Trust. We recently went mountain biking down in Drumlanrig, Dumfries which was absolutely stunning and I'm so glad I get the opportunity to join in with the cycling trips. I really enjoy volunteering with ELREC, I have had the opportunity to learn new skills and participate in training days which has given me more confidence in my job search. But more importantly I've met some really lovely people from many different places and got to join in on some really fun events! I feel like ELREC has been of amazing help and enjoyment, so thank you!



Claire Robertson





Bright Choices

The outreach team of Bright Choices is only 'One Woman Show' now! Nicole left us in March and I am now working full time covering both part-time positions.

Since beginning of the year, Bright Choices has run more 'My Life, My Choices' workshops; this time for second year pupils at Drummond High School. Also, series of short honour-based violence trainings were run for A&E staff at Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh in February and March. Two sessions of 'Open Training' was delivered to the participants from third and public sector which were received very well. We are planning to run more open trainings. So watch this space!

To mark this year's International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) on 6 February, the City of Edinburgh Child Protection Committee and Bright Choices organised an event in partnership. The event was aimed at frontline professionals across Health, the Police, Education, Social Services and the Third Sector whose work brings them in direct contact with women who have survived FGM and girls and young women at risk of the practice. The outreach team of Bright Choices at ELREC ran the information stall at the event.

Currently, I am developing a training course to train teachers and youth workers to deliver 'My Life, My Choices' program to young people. It will be ready in July, so teachers could sign up for the whole-day-long course before the start of the term in autumn.



FGM Event

No Hate Here

The project has been very active over the last couple of months. We have designed and published Hate Crime awareness posters and leaflets and distributed them in establishments throughout Leith including supermarkets, student accommodation, hostels, libraries and faith centres.

In March, we ran Hate Crime awareness training at our offices, open to practitioners working with people live in Leith area, besides a session of in house training for 'Leith Home Start' staff and volunteers. To make the impact of the project even more long lasting and to leave a legacy of our short life work; We developed a 'Hate Crime Training for Trainer' which is a 5 hours intense training aimed mainly at education staff, and other practitioners working with diverse groups of people . The training is complemented by a handbook which is designed by NHH team and includes activities and exercises to be used in training for variety of participants. The first round of the training ran on the 19th of April and for which we received very positive response and feedback. The second round of the Training for Trainer, which is scheduled for the 16th of May, is fully booked now!



Hate Crime Open Training—27 March 2017



Hate Crime Training for Trainer—19 April 2017

Equalities Engagement—Diversity in Public Life

Event: Is Politics Racist?

As the Scottish local authority election approach, May this year, *diversity in public life* believes it is time to re-address the issues of BME underrepresentation in politics. Therefore, a cross party debate and Q & A session hosted to allow the public to address the issue. The event took place on 11 April 2017, Tuesday at 6pm Venue: Leith Academy, Academy Park, Edinburgh EH6 8JQ.



As a keynote address, Dr Timothy Peace, Dept. of Politics, Stirling University, spoken about BME community in Scottish Politics. Dr Parveen Akhtar, lecturer in Political Science and international Relations at Aston University and member of Aston's Centre for Europe (ACE) was talked about; Ethnicity-based political mobilisations in British Politics: Successes and Challenges. Representatives from different political party took part on the panel to answer the questions from audience.

As a keynote address, Dr Timothy Peace, Dept. of Politics, Stirling University, spoken about BME community in Scottish Politics. Dr Parveen Akhtar, lecturer in Political Science and international Relations at Aston University and member of Aston's Centre for Europe (ACE) was talked about; Ethnicity-based political mobilisations in British Politics: Successes and Challenges. Representatives from different political party took part on the panel to answer the questions from audience.



Vita Zaporozcenko from the Liberal democrats, Cllr Cameron Rose from the Scottish Conservatives, Amy McNeese-Mechan for the SNP, Cllr. Gordon Munro from the labour party and Peter McColl from the Labour party. Nick Greener from ELREC facilitated the question and answer session. Foyso Choudhury MBE, Chair of the ELREC welcomed everyone at the beginning of the event.

There were mix of opinion about variety of issues in response to these questions above and in reply to the question; whether the politics is racist or not. All political party representatives felt that there should be more involvement of the BME community within their party. There are many suggestions provided by the audiences and the speakers how to increase engagement of the BME communities in politics. They are happy to work in partnership with diversity in public life in the future to foster engagement.

Events and Activities: Scottish Council Election 2017

Ahead of Scottish local authority election, Diversity in public life project hosted series of event and activities to increase participation of BME communities in the local election process and voter registration.



Equalities Engagement—Diversity in Public Life (cont'd)

A drop in session took place on 22nd March 2017, 2.00pm – 4.00pm at ELREC. The drop aims to provide information (i.e candidates packs) and advice on nomination process of the council election.



A voter registration event hosted on 12 April 2017, 2pm -4pm at ELREC, jointly with the Lothian electoral registration office and ELREC Youth Zone. The event aims to support BME communities and young people on voter registration. Colleagues from electoral registration office provided services on information check and update at the original electoral roll.

Training session on Communication Skills in Public Life

Diversity in public life hosted a training session about communication skills in public life on 30 April 2017, 12.30pm at Leith Community Education Centre. Member of the PLC (Public Life Scheme) and BME community councillors were attended to the course. The course facilitated by Moi Ali, trainer and communication expert.

The main outcome of the session was as below:

Find out what effective communication is and why it is important in public life

Discover how to communicate more effectively in public life – and in your everyday personal life

Pick up practical yet powerful communication tips!

Be empowered and confident in carrying out communications in different situations

The session has also covered the best ways to make an impact on public meetings. Feedback from the participants shows that everyone has enjoyed the interactive delivery of the session.



Meeting with Jeremy Balfour MSP at ELREC

Lothian MSP Jeremy Balfour visited diversity in public life project on 07 February 2017, 9.30am. During the visit, Jeremy met with the PLC (public life champion) participants and ELREC staff members and discuss about his role at the parliament and highlighted the needs of BME participation in public life. He offered his support to work in partnership with diversity in public life project to promote engagement of BME communities within his constituency and the Scottish parliament. He also mentioned that Scottish Conservation party is keen to getting involved with BME communities.

Training course on Confidence Building in public life

A training workshop on Confidence building in Public Life held on 19 February 2017, 12.30pm at Leith Community Education Centre, Edinburgh. The training session was hosted by ELREC Diversity in public life and facilitated by Ferial Puren and Fatoumata Sidibeh.

Equalities Engagement—Diversity in Public Life (cont'd)

The session aims to demonstrate different techniques to build confidence in real life scenario within the public life roles. Feedback shows that everyone has enjoyed the interactive session overwhelmingly. Throughout the course, participants have gained a clearer understanding of developing innate confidence in general, importance of confidence, and ways of self-development.

Participants of Public Life Champion (PLC) scheme and BME community councillors were attended to the course.



UK Parliamentary Week 13-19 November

I have attended to an event: How UK parliament works, on 21 February 2017 at the Quaker Meeting House. The event was hosted by UK parliament outreach team to engage public and raise awareness about UK parliament. The event revealed that, UK Parliament Week to be celebrated in November (13-19Nov)

this year. To coincide this week, various events, activities and talks will take place across the UK between 13 -19 November. Diversity in public life project has signed up to be part of the parliamentary week in November. Details of the event or activities will be published nearer to the time.

[Make sure you're registered to vote!](#)

You need to be on the electoral register by **Monday 22 May** to vote in 8th June's General Election. It only takes five minutes to register and you can do it online. Here is the link: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote . Spread the word and get family and friends to register too ! **Please note, you don't need to register again if you've already registered. If anything has changed since the last election, i.e address, name and voting preference, then you need to update.**

General Election
8th June 2017

Upcoming events at Diversity in public life project

- **Workshop on BME Women in Public Appointment**, 6pm -8pm at ELREC 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH
 - **Training workshop on Public Speaking**, 11am – 3pm, venue: tbc
- Free to PLC members, BME individuals interested in public life and lived around Edinburgh and Lothian. Crèche and childcare may be available (subject prior booking). To book a place email me: mrahman@elrec.org.uk

Mizan Rahman

mrahman@elrec.org.uk

Support and Advice

In the period between December 1st and March 23rd the support and advice team have had 5 housing complaints, 2 discrimination complaints, 3 benefits enquiries, 1 Harrassment case, 2 employment enquiries and one immigration inquiry. I have to stress that a few are ongoing and add to my workload.

We have had some serious and disturbing enquiries where support has been difficult to find. The problem identified is that there is no criminal advice service available in Scotland. This leaves those in the criminal justice system fully dependent on the information given to them by their advocates. With race related crime this can be troublesome and more should be done by way of support in this area. We tackled the issue as best we could and we were assured that the support we gave was gratefully received, albeit unsatisfactory; given that we cannot rightly approach matters of criminal law.

I have worked on and off with an employment case of racial harassment and the client and myself are delighted in that his case looks to be ending in a positive way. We were thanked for our dedication and assistance in our support capacity.

We have supported a client on a terrible case of harassment in their neighbourhood. We have helped them see where the council have owed them a duty of care and helped them through the victimisation of racial targeting.

My volunteer Tiffany has been helping me with the difficult task of digitising our files and we are making some progress although we have had a few problems. Our goal is now to make the administration of the service far easier and paperless. Once we have looked at our responsibilities under the data protection act we can manage our admin digitally and look to our next task of finding our precise remit as an advice service. This is necessary in that we can fully advertise what we do and bring in more clients.

Martin Kumins

martin.krumins@elrec.org.uk

OUR FUNDERS



Routes to Roots—Adopting Scotland as a Homeland

Hi everyone,

Routes to Roots has been busy over the last few months since the start of 2017. We have focused on interviewing members of the community and increasing our engagement with the communities. Below you can see some of the things that we have been up to.

Heritage site visits:

On the 19th of February we arranged a visit to the Synagogue of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation with a group of 10 people. The trip was enjoyed by the group with an informative question and answer session with Rabbi Rose. We also arranged a trip to the Central Mosque on the 22nd of April. A group of 17 attendees had a great discussion on Islam with Imam Yahya Barry.



Interviews:

We have conducted 6 interviews over the last few months and have a few more in the pipeline. The videos of these will be online soon. Thank you to everyone that has participated so far. We are looking to get a good snapshot of the different communities so if you or anyone you know might be interested in telling their story please to get in touch.



Podcasts:

We started releasing our podcasts in January. We have released 10 videos so far about Wojtek the Bear and the Sikh community in Edinburgh. We have a few great videos Korrika 20 and our Mosque visit that will be coming out soon. If you haven't seen any videos yet check them out on our website or the social media pages below!

Upcoming:

Over the next few weeks and months we have a number of exciting things coming up. We will also be going to the Great Polish



also be going to the Great Polish



Map of



ELREC Routes to Roots



@ELREC_Routes



Multicultural Heritage Meetup



ELRECUK

From Volunteers

I started volunteering for the ELREC around half a year ago, primarily recording audio and providing other general assistance to the 'Routes to Roots' project.

Last year; having finished a degree in Sound Design and not really being particularly clear on what to do next, I took a trip to the volunteering centre on Leith Walk. I discovered that the ELREC were looking for volunteers to help with recording video interviews and podcasts that explore the diverse cultures that have come to our city, and the connections we share with them. Recording and working with sound was my chosen subject at university and college for the last five years and I already had the necessary equipment so I was more than happy to come in and help them out. It's been great to get some practical and fun experience of working as a sound-person and video editor that I can use in my portfolio and the team at the office have been really friendly and accommodating.

I've not been at it that long and have already met and recorded some very interesting people from all over the world that have made Scotland their home. It has enabled me to feel more confident in communicating with others and given me much needed practice in my chosen field, free from a lot of the pressures that come with doing a similar job in media. For anyone considering helping out I would absolutely recommend it.

Chris Morris



Calling for new members at ELREC!!

ELREC strives to embody the principles of transparency; integrity; equity; mutual co-operation; and participatory democracy.

ELREC welcomes all individuals and organisations who share our aims, visions, and values to join us as members. As a member you will have the opportunity to shape ELREC policy direction; participate in ELREC's annual Management Board election; and attend ELREC events and lectures. Our members also act as links to various communities. You will receive a copy of the ELREC Quarterly Community Newsletter and receive information on equality related events.

We welcome membership from individuals from diverse groups as this results in the better representation of all protected characteristics. We would be much obliged if you would consider joining us, as well as helping us by encouraging individuals and organisations known to you to join ELREC.

More information regarding membership, application forms as well as full copies of ELREC's Memorandum and Articles of Association, can be viewed by visiting our membership webpage or contacting our office:

www.elrec.org.uk/member.htm



ADVERTISING

We welcome organisations to advertise in the ELREC Community Newsletter for:

- Promoting services
- Disseminating flyers
- Campaigns
- Vacancies
- Consultations
- General marketing

This service is available for a contribution of £100 to £250 depending on the size and placement of the advertisement. To find out more, please contact Didem Kaner Ural on 0131 556 0441 or email: admin@elrec.org.uk

Our newsletter is published every quarter in March, June, September and December of each year.

CONFERENCE ROOM BOOKINGS

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis for £20 per hour (reduced rate for small charities and community groups)

Tea & Coffee £1 per head
Please contact the ELREC office for additional information or to make a booking.



FUNDERS

ELREC is funded by:

- **Scottish Government**
- **Keep Scotland Beautiful Fund**
- **Voluntary Action Fund**
- **Big Lottery Fund**

VOLUNTEERS

Adithya Suriyapperuma, Aileas Pringle, Alex Rainbow, Alexander Slowman, Alice Barker, Arati Chavan, Arran Imrie, Barbara Ena Ostrowska, Ceri Strang, Choi Ling Lzung, Christina Hellevik, Christophe Brogliolo, Connie Yeung, David Panton, David Weir, Deborah Nombebe, Diline Abushaban, Duncan Howard, Elle Bain, Emma Buchan, Ewan Logie, Francisco Saura Carillo, Gregor Hardie, Hazel Kapepala Makunku, Henry Omorere, Holli Kerr, Holly Smith, James McDonald, Jenny Scholtysik, Katerina Taliatzi, Kirsty Landale, Larissa Engelmann, Laura Sinclair, Lauren Bradley, Leda Mappouridou, Madhavi Lathha, Marilyn de Santos, Marta Gordon, Martina Massoli, Matilda Marshall, Mina Omarchevska, Nagat Hamed, Neena Agarwal, Paolo Cavaliere, Pawel Bladocha, Ratiba Kabli, Rebecca Hutchison, Roisin Bathe, Rong Fu, Russel Marlborough, Ryan Whyte, Sara Fitzimons, Sara Ridolfi, Stephanie Smith, Stuart Black, Tamsyn Londale-Smith, Thomas Sutcliffe, Wendy Tsang, Yueyue Fitzgerald, Yuklan Wong, Zach Allan

SERVICES

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC), founded in 1971, is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from a wide range of organisations. ELREC has a remit to work across the areas of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils.

Our Objectives

- to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination
- to reduce inequality and promote a culture of human rights
- to promote good relations between persons of different groups without distinction

We pursue our aims through:

- Engagement with communities of protected characteristics
- Complainant aid for victims of discrimination and harassment.
- Support for communities in influencing change by facilitating interaction between communities and authorities
- Consultancy on equality policies, procedures and delivery of customised training on equality matters

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)

14 Forth Street

Edinburgh

EH1 3LH

(T) 0131 556 0441

(F) 0131 556 8577

(E) admin@elrec.org.uk

(W) www.elrec.org.uk

Charity Number: SC007896

Company Number: SC183419

Larger print newsletter available on request

